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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Essays, Historical and Literary. By JOHN FISKE. Vol. I., Historical ; Vol. II., In Favorite Fields. (New York : The Macmillan Company. 1902. Pp. vii, 422 ; 316.)

Two handsome volumes bearing the name of John Fiske under an attractive title make a direct appeal to a large body of students of American history, who know the rarity of that combination of felicitous style and scholarly grasp of a subject which his best work represents. From the title it would be reasonable to expect the ripened, crystallized results of his years of training and experience as a writer. Fresh, illuminating discussions of disputed questions, or keen, insightful criticism of men and movements would have been most welcome from this broad-minded, sympathetic scholar. But whoever looks for these things in these essays will not find them ; they are not there. The essays are in reality artist's sketches, some of them made with reference to future ambitious canvases, some of them in response to the pressure of popular demand for lectures. Probably not one was designed in its present form for final publication. The posthumous character of the publication may soften a little the disappointment of the reader, but the final estimate of the value of these volumes must be untempered by this consideration.

Even without the statements in the prefatory notes, it would be impossible not to discover at once that the title of these two volumes is misleading. Many of the essays are nothing more than the published manuscripts of stock lectures or occasional addresses ; others are practically duplicates, for the most part, of matter already in print in other books by Dr. Fiske. Considerable portions of the essays in the first volume are found in articles contributed by him to Appleton's *Cyclopedia of American Biography*. A good illustration is the essay on "Charles Lee, Soldier of Fortune." "The Fall of New France," which comprises about one-fifth of the second volume, contains nothing not previously published in the other posthumous volume *New France and New England*, which was nearly in final shape when Dr. Fiske died.

The first volume consists of nine biographical sketches, or estimates, of leaders in American affairs between 1765 and 1850. Beginning with Thomas Hutchinson and closing with Daniel Webster, the list includes Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, and Jackson. The value of at least the last four is not great. They bear no signs of any intimate acquaintance with other than secondary materials relating to the period after 1789. No new facts are added, no new point of view is established, no particularly strong or striking restatement of accepted judgments is effected.

The essay on "Thomas Hutchinson, Last Royal Governor of Massachusetts" is easily the best number in the volume. The essays of the second volume are less historical, less biographical, and more literary, more personal. Four of the ten essays deal with historical subjects; six treat of philosophical or literary matters. Walking and talking with heroic masters like Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer in the domain of evolutionary philosophy, Dr. Fiske is indeed "in favorite fields." Even the alien in that realm feels the charm of his reminiscences of the great leaders, and of his broad, sane views of the progress and meaning of evolution. "Herbert Spencer's Service to Religion," "Reminiscences of Thomas Huxley," and "The Deeper Significance of the Boston Tea Party" are the best portions of this second volume. They illustrate at once Dr. Fiske's remarkable power of sympathetic appreciation of men in their times and places, his grasp on the profounder meaning of incidents, and his ability to state in lucid, interesting fashion his matured personal judgment.

"Connecticut's Influence on the Federal Constitution," the fourth essay in the second volume, certainly obtains the reader's attention under false pretenses. The exceedingly important part played by the delegates from Connecticut at a dangerous point in the proceedings of the Convention of 1787 cannot be too carefully demonstrated; the title invites expectation of a critical study from the author of *The Critical Period of American History* of some of the obscure but potent forces shaping the destiny of the nation. Were the arguments used by Ellsworth, Sherman, and Johnson to secure adoption of their compromise plan drawn from their experience with a "federal system" in Connecticut? Or were they mainly drawn from their patriotic Yankee common sense to meet a crisis? Were these arguments really very effective with the Convention, which failed by a tie vote to defeat the scheme for equal representation in the Senate? How much credit should be given Baldwin, of Georgia, a recent emigrant from Connecticut, who disbelieved in the desirability of the compromise that nationalized some features of the Connecticut "federal system," and yet voted for the compromises as something better than failure? Not a ray of light is cast on any such problems by the essay. It was designed for local consumption, not for general use. Hence discussions of the growing interest in American history, of the Puritan spirit, of the Connecticut migrations, of the Fundamental Orders of 1639, and of the union of Connecticut and New Haven consume six-sevenths of the essay, the proceedings and arguments of 1787, the only real evidence in the case, being disposed of in three pages.

These two volumes demonstrate anew that the publication of popular lectures in the form in which they were delivered is always risky and sometimes unfortunate. Some of the qualities which make such lectures successful, the elaboration of incident, the gossip, the familiar colloquial humor, do not lend charm or force to the printed page. A little slang, such as now and then appears in these essays (Vol. II., p. 59, for ex-

ample) may enliven a serious address but, put into print, it may really blot the book. The careless superlative, so often used in the essay on "John Milton," may become a harmless comparative with a hearer, but in grim black and white it irritates a reader. The essay just mentioned, in its style, its proportions, and its carelessness, is unpardonable. The judgment which devotes five pages to *Lycidas* and one to *Paradise Lost*, while asserting that "the popular theory of creation which Lyall and Darwin overthrew was founded more on *Paradise Lost* than upon the Bible," is thenceforth subject to suspicion. When all has been said, these two posthumous volumes of essays add nothing to the reputation of Dr. Fiske with scholars or casual readers. Their publication is easily understood, but hardly excusable.

KENDRIC CHARLES BABCOCK.

The Teaching of History and Civics in the Elementary and the Secondary School. By HENRY E. BOURNE. [American Teachers' Series.] (New York, London, and Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1902. Pp. x, 385.)

IN the preface the author modestly states that his purpose is "to aid teachers of history, and especially those who have not had special training in historical work, better to comprehend the nature of the subject." That this purpose will be attained there can be no doubt, for this is the latest and best book upon the teaching of history. The causes of its excellence are patent. In the first place, it is the work of a trained historical student who is familiar with the best literature of his subject. In the next place, the method of presentation and the examples and illustrations that are used are sufficient evidence that the writer is a successful teacher. And in the third place, neither fads nor radical methods are here advocated. Sanity of judgment and catholicity of view command the confidence of the reader from the first page to the last. Although the title of the book is *The Teaching of History and Civics*, the latter subject is treated rather incidentally. Only two short chapters discuss the aim and practical methods in teaching civics, and aside from that there is almost nothing. Again, as is natural, the work of the elementary school is subordinated to that of the secondary school, although in the programme of courses in history recommended for the former Professor Bourne departs more widely from prevailing ideas than he does in the case of the latter.

The book is divided, quite evenly, into two parts. Part I. deals with what may be termed the theory of the subject, covering such topics as "the meaning of history," "the value of history," "history in French and German schools," "the school and the library," "methods of teaching history," and "the source method." Part II. takes up the various divisions of the course of study, with practical suggestions as to the general method of handling each period, and with advice as to the use of books. In the first part one finds that all of the best literature upon the various topics has been considered, and there are excellent summaries of